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ABSTRACT

The successful partnership in education established between churches and community colleges in the Dallas area is reviewed in this paper. First, the background to local church involvement in ministering to the colleges is described, and the reasons for working jointly are outlined. Then, the development of campus ministries and ministry councils on the Dallas community college campuses is traced. Next, the involvement of St. Mark Presbyterian Church with Eastfield College is recounted. The paper describes several of their joint activities, including college courses offered at the church; several efforts focusing on older adults, e.g., a Senior Citizens Camp; a project to improve the quality of life in the community; the provision of inexpensive quality testing and guidance for dropouts and adults changing careers; the development of programs and activities for singles; cooperative activities in child development and early childhood education; the organization of an international student exchange program; and church involvement in curriculum development. The paper concludes with a rationale for breaking down the barriers between churches and colleges, arguing that each seeks to minister to community needs and that the institutions can work closely and fruitfully together to meet the needs of their often overlapping memberships. (HB)

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UNITED MINISTRIES IN EDUCATION
COMMUNITY COLLEGE PROGRAM
William E. Hallman, Director

PERSPECTIVES ON
THE CHURCH AND THE
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Paper Number Eighteen

THE CHURCH AND THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE: PARTNERSHIP IN MINISTRY

by William H. Tiemann

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PREFACE

October, 1981: I am sitting in a Board meeting of the Greater Dallas Community of Churches, which has just voted to extend its sponsorship and full support for three full-time and three part-time staff to facilitate partnership between the seven campuses of the Dallas County Community College District and the Dallas area churches.

It has been just four years since I first received a phone call from Betsy Turecky, inviting me to participate in an "exploration" team of local pastors, who soon came to share her vision of the "mutual mission" of the church and the community colleges of our community. Betsy now directs a far-reaching ministry which touches the lives of congregations, students, faculty, staff, local community agencies, and most significantly for me, the local church.

I remember that when I first responded to Betsy's phone call in the Spring of 1977, I had been rather discouraged with my attempts to relate pastorally to the local community college, but this time a very different approach to community college ministry was being proposed.

It worked; and now I am part of a story worth sharing.

BEGINNINGS

In May, 1970, I arrived at St. Mark Presbyterian Church, Dallas, Texas, as its new pastor. That fall, a new community college opened nearby. The church was then 17 years old, had a membership of 500, and was situated on the extreme eastern edge of Dallas, very near the suburban communities of Garland and Mesquite. The neighborhood around the church was white, middle-class, blue- and white-collar folks. Part of the housing, built twenty years before, was beginning to deteriorate, and there was some gloom among church members about the blight evident in the surrounding community.

At the same time, there was real enthusiasm about Eastfield Community College being built on the boundary line between Mesquite and Dallas, a little over a mile away. No one had ever thought a college would be built in this neighborhood because the people were not typical ivy league types. Less than half had ever attended college themselves. Yet, they did have high ambitions for their children. The largest high school in the area, Bryan Adams, had about 85% of its graduating seniors enroll in college. North Mesquite High and South Garland High, the two other major secondary schools in the nearby suburbs, reported similar percentages. So, a community college would have a high potential for attracting neighborhood students from each year's senior class. The parents saw this institution as a plus for their community, as well as a way to make a college education for their children more affordable. Very few understood that the community college might affect their own lives as well and

that many of them would one day take either a credit or a community service course from Eastfield.

One of the exciting things about accepting the call to St. Mark was realizing that I could have a close working relationship with the administration and faculty at Eastfield. This was made clear by Dr. Jan LeCroy, the then president, now Chancellor, of the Dallas County Community College District. He invited all local pastors in the area to a meeting in March, 1970, at which he expressed his own sincere hope of a close cooperation between the new community college and the churches. Our constituencies were the same; our educational aims certainly overlapped; and the chance for each of us to be a resource to the other was challenging. I left the meeting excited about the many possibilities in this new charge I was about to take over.

For one thing, Dr. LeCroy had affirmed my own understanding of the necessary basic relationship of the church and the university. Each is to be the other's best critic as well as best friend. Each is to point out the failures of the other in ministering to society. Each is to support the other in a search for truth that is multi-dimensional and not academic in the old rationalistic sense.

More than this, whatever justification could be given to the relations of church and university multiplied ten-fold when a community college became the partner. Just as we in the church saw our mission field as the local community, so the community col-

lege viewed its mission there also. And what a mission, with hundreds of courses--some for credit, some community service types--offered to interested persons, teaching everything from aerobics to car repair, from history of religions to speed reading.

EASTFIELD CAMPUS MINISTRY

In May, 1970, several local clergy initiated the Eastfield Campus Ministry--a committee of 15 persons made up of six students, three faculty, three administrators and staff, and three community representatives. These latter would be appointed by the Greater Dallas Community of Churches (GDCC). The function of the campus ministry committee would be to:

1. discover the needs that exist on the Eastfield College campus;
2. seek way to meet those needs;
3. develop the resources to meet the needs; and
4. bring the resources to bear in a program to meet the needs.

Charles F. Vorkoper, GDCC chaplain at El Centro College, the first of the community colleges in the Dallas County system, was to serve as staff person for the ministry, mainly as resource and enabler.

The program devised by this group was to be two-fold. First, there would be a fellowship group of Eastfield students who were members of the surrounding churches. The group would gather and meet at a stated weekly time on the campus. Several of the area clergy would serve as sponsors for this group.

In addition, each clergy person would make himself (all males in this case) available for conversation or counseling during the

noon break of all classes from 12 to 1:30 p.m. They would sit at a table in the campus center, advertise "psychiatric care, 5¢," and see what happened.

Nothing did. No one came. They felt shunned.

With some despair beginning to set in, the committee decided that what the students really needed was an organized series of special interest programs with well-known speakers. So, in the spring of 1971, four noon-time seminars were planned on these topics: Abortion, Ecology, Eastern Religions, and Why the Church? Since hardly anyone attended the first three, despite large advertising posters provided by student services, the fourth never came off. The ministers ended this phase of their ministry feeling like complete failures.

EASTFIELD AREA CLERGY

In May, 1971, the Eastfield Area Clergy, a new organization formed that year, invited Dr. Jan LeCroy, president, and Dr. Norbert Dettman, dean, to meet with them. These educators discussed the "nature and mission" of Eastfield College, and stressed the hope that it would be a true "community" college, serving the needs of a wide variety of people living in the area. They reminded the group about the community service courses, as well as those offered for credit; that the college had an open-door policy for anyone with a high school diploma; and that a "guided studies" program was available for those not yet ready for college-level work.

The ministers discussed the possibility of establishing an "encounter group" for clergy in the area, possibly in the field of

marriage counseling, using Eastfield faculty as a resource. They also heard that the college was interested in working with area clergy to meet the religious needs of the students, to do religious programming, to provide a chaplaincy service, and to refer students needing spiritual counseling to appropriate area ministers.

During the next several years, a few feeble attempts were made to do volunteer campus ministry at Eastfield, coordinated by the staff of the Greater Dallas Community of Churches, but nothing much came of it. Traditional models did not ssem to work on a campus where students were all commuting and where, after class, all immediately left the campus for home or job.

Yet, at the same time, the college continued to grow rapidly to an enrollment of nearly 10,000 students, half attending during the day and the others at night, and with many community people of all ages beginning to be enrolled in non-credit community service courses. The average age of students quickly rose to 27, as thousands of people saw an opportunity to attend college inexpensively and at a time in their working lives when college courses could help with their jobs and add to their income. Many of these people were members of neighborhood churches. Each congregation benefitted as it saw hope and vision come alive in people of all ages who, many for the first time, became exposed to serious educational endeavors.

The first new thrust of church involvement, however, came several years later, in

DALLAS COMMUNITY COLLEGE MINISTRY BEGINS

1976, when a meeting of judicatory representatives and representatives of the Greater Dallas Community of Churches was called to explore the possibility of a community college ministry on every campus of the Dallas County Community College District, soon seven in number. By May of 1977, the North Texas Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church approved "advance special funding" for the "Dallas Community College Ministry" (DCCM), and in August, a special grant of $5,332 from the Texas United Campus Christian Life Committee (Disciples, Presbyterians, and United Church of Christ) allowed the DCCM to call Betsy Turecky, a United Methodist minister and former English teacher in the Dallas Community College District, to begin work as executive director. Initial work began on two campuses: Eastfield and Richland.

In May of 1978, the United Methodist Church approved contributing the full salary package for the director, and in July, a foundation grant of $20,000 allowed the hiring of additional part-time staff to begin ministries on six of the seven campuses. That fall, the Greater Dallas Community of Churches agreed to fund about one-third of the DCCM's budget (originally only about $40,000, with 82% spent for staff salaries--no building to maintain, office space contributed, and most programming done through joint sponsorship with the campuses). The rest of the funding support was provided by eight denominations and several area churches.

One of the immediate results of the formation of the DCCM was that area Ministry Councils were organized around most of the

community college campuses. A covenant was developed between the DCCM and local congregations. The purpose was to establish a commitment between both parties which would allow for mutual support and accountability for shared ministry.

For its part, the Dallas Community College Ministry promised:

"1. to minister to your students, faculty, and staff on the Community College Campus.

2. to inform your congregation of resources and events which are available to them on the Community College Campus.

3. to assist you in meeting special needs, for example:

   a. by arranging special courses in your congregation through the Community Service Division of the College;

   b. by creating special events for singles and senior citizens in your congregation;

   c. by continuing our Alternative for the Holidays Campaign by providing Alternative Lifestyle study groups.

4. to be available as a resource person to your religion classes, in special workshops, or in your services of worship.

5. to serve you as the 'presence' of the church on campus through classroom lectures, counseling and referral, cooperative programming with various divisions of the Community College, and Religious Awareness events."

For its part, the local congregation promised:

"1. to identify those persons in your congregations to the Campus Minister who are students, faculty, or staff at the Community College.

2. to assign a representative from your congregation to serve a one-year term on the Community College Ministry

Council in your area.

3. to actively support the ministry and facilitate its continuance by making a financial commitment of $___ per ___ to the Community College Ministry through the Greater Dallas Community of Churches which shall be over and above your regular giving to the GDCC and specifically designated for the Community College Ministry."

As the campus ministers developed this relationship with area congregations, each church became more aware of its ongoing relationship to the nearby community college. This enabled one more step in opening up channels of communication and ministry between the two.

COMMUNITY SERVICE COURSES

For St. Mark Presbyterian Church, the biggest step forward in relations with Eastfield College came one afternoon several years ago when two staff members of the Community Services Division of the college, Susie Dean and Kay Mosby, made an appointment with me to discuss the possibility of our church being used as a base for some community service courses. Over the years, I had taken several community service courses myself--defensive driving, sailing, Spanish--and I'd known of other churches offering their facilities for these courses, but I didn't know how we might get involved.

Susie and Kay were quick to point out that there were obligations on both sides. The church would need to provide space for the courses at no cost to the college. It would also agree to publicize the courses among the church membership. On its part, the college would organize the course, find the instructor, take care of registration

and publicity, and even get the proper church key to the teacher. In addition, the college promised to be responsive to any suggestions for courses the church might have in order to better serve those in its nearby community.

I took the plan to our governing body, the Session, and with a few unspoken reservations, they approved it.

Over the years we have not regretted the decision, although the popularity of the courses, and the numbers of them, have added considerably to our monthly utility cost, especially in the hot summer months when the church gymnasium must be cooled several housrs in advance to prepare for the classes in women's aerobic dancing--a fairly strenuous form of exercise!

Some of the courses taught at St. Mark have been Chinese cooking (always popular), gourmet cooking, vegetarian cooking, cake decorating, holiday baking (all these using our new and well-equipped kitchen), CPR, Czech, aerobic dancing, canning and making preserves, beginning square dancing, ballroom dancing, country and western dancing, off-loom weaving, and more.

Not always has a member of the church been in each class, but the congregation has welcomed community people into its facilities with a spirit that demonstrates the Christian love we are called to profess. As far as I know, no person has joined our church because they first came to take a community service course. To some, this is disconcerting as they wonder if our opening our doors to the community is really "paying off." But most members take a broader view and understand

the mission of the church as always involving the local community, whether or not there is any "payoff."

COPING WITH AGING

Because there are a large number of senior citizens in the area served by both our church and Eastfield College, the campus minister at Eastfield, Jerry Miller, has been quick to relate to them and their special needs. An eight-week community service course entitled "Coping With Aging" grew out of this relationship. Jerry developed the course along with members of the Mesquite Senior Citizens Center. The resource/study guide for the course has been distributed nationally for use in local churches and campus ministry units, for which it was designed.

SENIOR CITIZENS CAMP

Working with Fran Westbrook and the Mesquite Senior Citizens groups, Jerry then planned a Senior Citizens Camp for students of Eastfield and members of local churches. College students planning to work with institutions for the elderly could register for the course along with seniors themselves, and receive three hours credit. Students spent the morning studying the aging process and discussing this with participants at the camp. During the remainder of the time, the students helped provide leadership for the camp. Activities for the seniors included fishing, boating, hiking, swimming, crafts, sing-alongs, and daily mile walks. This event was subsidized through grants and scholarships from local area churches. The response was most gratifying and many of those attending were given a new and different kind of experience which they had not

had before in their lives.

EMERITUS INSTITUTE

Out of this and other work with senior citizens came a grart proposal from the DCCM to the national bodies of the Disciples of Christ and the Presbyterians for an Emeritus Institute at Eastfield. Both bodies responded positively, so the Institute was held for the first time in the fall of 1981. Offering courses specifically designed for older students at a minimal cost of five dollars, the program was co-sponsored by the Greater Dallas Community of Churches Community College Ministry and the Community Services Division of Eastfield.

Announcements about the courses went to older adults in all neighboring churches as well as those enrolled in the college. Special announcements were made at neighborhood senior citizen groups and AARP meetings. Twelve courses were offered: Self-Awareness, Beginning Acting, Ballroom Dancing, Intermediate Bridge, A Tour of Historic Granbury (and a production at its "opry house"), Security for the Future, the Gospel According to Peanuts (Robert Short himself taught this one!), World Religions, What's In Store For The Future?, A Good Age (Enjoying Growing Older), and Lawns, Trees, and Houseplants of Dallas. All courses were offered at area churches and community centers. The response from the churches was better than anticipated and the program will be repeated when additional funding is found.

QUALITY OF LIFE

Perhaps the most exciting involvement of our church with Eastfield College was being part of a joint project to improve the quality of life in our community. It was

named "Creating New Futures Today." Kathryn Berry, from the Community Services Division at Eastfield and coincidentally a member of St. Mark Presbyterian Church, served as coordinator. Robert Theobold, a futurist, served as project resource person. Three groups were chosen to be part of this pilot program: the Mesquite Jaycees, St. Mark Presbyterian Church, and Eastfield College.

The project dealt with many different subjects in its two-year life span: rich/poor tensions, American population changes, migrations, ecological balance, energy/resource availability, telecommunications, changing knowledge patterns, climate, biology, etc.

Each of the three sponsoring groups was asked for input so that several times members of St. Mark Church were included in brainstorming and planning sessions about what would improve our quality of community life, now and in the future.

After several months, St. Mark chose to concentrate on ways to make our neighborhood blocks safer and more livable. Members were encouraged to hold block parties so people living on the same block could get to know each other. CPR courses were held for block representatives so that someone on each block would know how to give it. Law enforcement officers were scheduled for church meetings to talk about neighborhood safety. St. Mark called its program "Block Neighbors Alive," the initials BNA symbolizing a connection like DNA. The goal was to provide family services for a one-block area of neighbors that would allow these people to

become self-sufficient (services include economic, social, and emotional aids). Forms were prepared so that persons could record each family living on their block, names of children, elderly persons, the disabled, etc. Block parties were held so that neighbors could begin to trust each other, depend on each other, share their needs with each other.

Eight neighborhood needs were identified: illness, loneliness, emotional stability, hunger, crime protection and prevention, transportation, babysitting. and the handicapped. Jacie Phillips, an elder at St. Mark, served as project coordinator for the church. All plans were made in coordination with Eastfield College, Kathryn Berry (the coordinator), and Robert Theobold (the consultant). One Sunday, Robert himself, a Scottish Presbyterian layman, filled our pulpit and spoke his views about the future of our life as we know it now and the place the church will have in shaping new futures for us all. His thesis was that smaller groups--churches, neighborhoods, blocks, apartment living units, etc.--will be more important in the future than large institutions. The quality of life will only improve as we work on it locally, individually, right where we live.

One weekend, the church held a new futures workshop, discussing the changing roles of men and women in the '80s, and investments for the '80s, while our children learned "new games" taught by a member of the Eastfield College athletic department. Another time, church members were invited

to a community picnic on the Eastfield campus to celebrate with the whole community our desire to create a new future for ourselves in the years to come.

In the second year of the program, Eastfield College offered public lectures, credit and non-credit classes, and other events to involve the churches and the community in planning for our future. Lectures included such well-known leaders as Dr. Willis Harman, "Thinking Globally, Acting Locally"; Dr. Finley C. Campbell, "Tensions Between the Rich and the Poor"; and Mr. Leonel Castillo, "The Mexican Pipeline." In addition, fifteen different faculty members offered credit and non-credit courses on some phase of futures studies. Nothing in my recollection has brought the church and college closer together working on a common problem, than this set of programs and activities about our joint future. While it is too soon to evaluate the long-range results, an increased awareness of both the possibilities of the future and our responsibility to do something about shaping it has entered the minds of many of our church members.

TESTING AND GUIDANCE

Over the years our church has benefitted in many other ways by being near a community college. One of these has been the testing and guidance programs offered at Eastfield. Private colleges in the area charge $80 and $150 for a series of vocational guidance tests with interpretation, for graduating high school seniors or adults contemplating a career change. This cost is discouraging to many low- and middle-income families in our community. Eastfield College, on the

other hand, has made these tests and their interpretation available to all community people at a minimal cost, under $25. Consequently, as a pastor I have been able to refer a number of persons with vocational questions to the testing and guidance center at Eastfield and know that they are getting top quality counseling without the top prices that often go with it.

DAY SCHOOL

Our church day school has also benefitted from our nearness to Eastfield. Because the college itself runs a day school for the training of its students in child development and early childhood education, this department has served as a model learning center for other day schools in the area. Some of their faculty have come to work with ours, and some of their students have come to observe at our center. Our teachers and administration, in turn, have been in conferences with their faculty. This common striving for excellence in pre-school education has benefitted us both, as we have learned from each other.

FACULTY AS CHURCH MEMBERS

Our church program has also been enriched by Eastfield faculty who are church members. They bring skills to our congregation which we might have a hard time finding otherwise. Kathryn Berry, former coordinator of student development there, has taught classes in group skills and learning to understand ourselves. Patti Bradshaw, instructor in child development, has taught courses in developmental psychology and family relations. George Massingale, former instructor in music, has assisted in our choral program and often provided instrumentalists for

special church functions. While Kathryn and George have now gone on to new responsibilities in the community college district, they continue to be resources for us as we plan our yearly teaching and learning activities.

FACULTY AS CHURCH RESOURCES

A number of faculty have also been resources in our church school classes as experts in their particular fields. One faculty member taught a course on understanding Islam. It was offered to help our congregation become better acquainted with that revolutionary nation and its motives in holding Americans hostage. Another offered a course one year in world religions and, another year, a course in understanding the Moral Majority. A third has offered several courses in human relations training. Close church-college relations were able to facilitate these course offerings. One faculty member even spent a weekend at our women's retreat, leading the group in understanding concepts of social, moral, and faith development.

CULTURAL ENTERTAINMENT

The college has also served as a source of cultural entertainment for St. Mark families and groups. Concerts, plays, visiting artists and lecturers, etc., have all been made available to community groups at little or no cost. Many from our church have taken advantage of these programs so that in the last 10 years the general level of cultural appreciation has risen appreciably in both the church and the community.

SINGLES MINISTRY

Every church has a number of singles--those divorced, widowed, or unmarried. They come in all ages, but unless a church is very large, there are not enough in any one

congregation to form a viable group. Working with a number of Eastfield area churches, however, campus minister Jerry Miller established the Eastfield Area Singles Ministry. This group attended many of the college functions together, sometimes meeting at the college early for dinner before the program so that those hesitant about attending a concert or play by themselves had a group they could readily join.

COMMUNITY-WIDE EVENT

Later, these singles groups from several community colleges joined in a community-wide singles movement facilitated by another of our campus ministers, Lorren Mileham, at Brookhaven College. A wide range of activities--retreats, dances, study groups--were offered to singles from all the churches representing the Greater Dallas Community of Churches. Community college facilities and activities are often used as a focus for these singles meetings.

Lorren also served as coordinator for two other all-church functions. During the summer of 1981, when the drama department at Brookhaven Community College was producing "Fiddler on the Roof," one night was reserved for families from all the community churches. The hall was more than filled, so there is much encouragement to try a similar event next summer.

In addition, Lorren served as initiator for a church-wide, city-wide conference on hunger, both local and global. All churches were invited to participate in a dozen different workshops, to hear nationally known leaders who were working on alleviating hunger, and to take part in a feast-or-famine

meal which illustrated the average diet of many of the world's hungry.

ALTERNATIVES FOR HOLIDAYS

Another way in which the campus ministry has facilitated our involvement with Eastfield College has been with the "Alternatives" program. This national effort, developed by Bob Kochtitsky, has been adopted by the Dallas Community College Ministry as one of its major efforts each year. Through resources, workshops, and leadership from campus ministers, this program has given area churches, including our own, a new look at way to celebrate major holidays. Instructors on campus have included this emphasis in some of their classes, and several have served as leaders in teaching church groups better ways to conserve energy and natural resources. A common ethical concern for the environment and a simplified lifestyle has brought church and college closer together. Betsy Turecky, director of DCCM, received national recognition for this program on Walter Cronkite's CBS News.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT EXCHANGE

Scheduled for the fall of 1982 is still another project which will tie church and college together. An international exchange program for students from local area churches who are enrolled in a Dallas community college has been arranged with Ealing College in London, England. Host families from churches near Ealing have agreed to provide accommodations for these students at minimal cost and to integrate them into their own parish life during their stay. Because many of the students attending community colleges are from homes with modest incomes, this provides one more opportunity for life

enrichment for those who could not ordinarily afford it.

SKILLS FOR LIVING

The college has certainly influenced the church in a good way, but it also happens that the church can positively affect the college. A year ago, the Dallas Community College District initiated a self-study in order to evaluate its work in providing all students adequate skills for living. Eight skills were identified and the college sought input from community and church leadership about what should be included in the curriculum covering each area. At Eastfield College, several of our church's elders, as well as the director of Christian education and myself, were asked to serve on panels studying these skills: Living With Self, Living With Others, Living With Environments, Living As A Producer, Living As A Consumer, Living In The Community, Living Creatively, and Living In The Future. Our people felt gratified that their opinions were sought and therefore responded with enthusiasm to these invitations.

OTHER COLLEGE-CHURCH INVOLVEMENTS

Another time, our church was asked to lead a workshop at the college on the work we initiated in our "Block Neighbors Alive" program. Both college and community people were invited to get information about this new concept in neighborhood organization.

In addition, Eastfield College has recently formed a permanent Eastfield Associates Council of 16 persons to advise the administration, faculty, and staff on issues of mutual concern and to help interpret the college's program to the surrounding neighborhoods. As minister of St. Mark, I have

been asked to serve here (the only pastor), because Eastfield recognizes the interest our church has demonstrated in the college and its welfare for these past 11 years. It is satisfying to me as a local pastor to know that the wall separating church and state is not so high that it cannot be breached by goodwill and mutual concern.

THEOLOGICAL RATIONALE

In a world where human inertia and forces of entropy often hamper our best efforts to live free, responsible, and loving lives, both church and college are called to express in their own lives, and in their relation to each other, the best principles of the ethic of neighbor love. Too often church and college have stood at odds with each other, each afraid of the other's vocation, each fearful of the other's dominating ambitions, each certain that it alone was closer to the final truth. Today, this ancient enmity is being challenged by both an enlightened church and a more receptive atmosphere in the college.

If neighbor love is all that will allow our world to survive and conquer its inertia, then church and college are called to express this love in their relations to their constituencies and in their intercourse with each other. Each serves as an example for living; each serves as a teacher of enlightened lives; each serves as an institution that challenges us to be our best. In our common commitment to life lived by neighbor love, church and college find a great common mission and ministry to their particular community and to the world community. To the extent that each demonstrates neighbor love,

each will discover its best vocation.

CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS

As I reflect on some of the involvements our church has had with Eastfield College, I'm grateful for several things. First, without exception, the first president, Jan LeCroy, and the present president, Eleanor Ott, have been genuinely warm, caring individuals who have wanted the college to be a true community college and have in their own minds included the area congregations as members of that community.

Second, the concept of community service courses has enabled our church to be a part of college education in ways that otherwise would not have been possible. It has been good for us to host these courses and feel that we also were serving a community cause. Eastfield College itself is somewhat forbidding in its appearance. Set on a low hill in the middle of 250 acres of playing and recreation fields, its architecture reminds one of a Mont St. Michel. There seems to be no main entrance and strangers are not sure where to park. Older people in the community find it difficult to gather the courage to go there for the first time.

But taking the community service courses out of the college and placing them in area churches has somehow broken the ice. Now it is not too hard to visit the campus, for the college came first to our church.

Third, our church would not have been involved half as much with Eastfield College had it not been for the Campus Ministry of the Greater Dallas Community of Churches. This ministry has served again and again as a go-between to bring church and campus

together. It was serendipitous that Betsy Turecky, the director, was herself first an English instructor at Eastfield before she enetered seminary in 1973 and initiated the Dallas Community College Ministry in 1977. Her first-hand experience with campus procedures, as well as her acquaintance with college personnel, led to a warm relationship of mutual respect between the top administration and the ecumenical ministry of the churches. The Community College District's administrative decision to allow this ministry to function on campus as a unified interfaith ministry of Catholics, Protestants, and Jews has won favor with both students and faculty, and has prevented many of the religious rivalries that may occur on campuses where a large number of different groups appeal for the students' support.

Of course, several other religious groups are recognized as student groups and function on some of the campuses, but these operate chiefly as "student nurture" groups and do not share our emphasis on intentional partnership between church and campus in the diverse areas of cooperation described above.

In 1979, the Dallas County Community College District Foundation honored the Greater Dallas Community of Churches' Community College Ministry as a recipient of one of its first three "Community Associate" awards. This recognition of our common aims was pleasing affirmation of our work. Now, with the full sponsorship of the Greater Dallas Community of Churches, the funding support and continuity of our community college ministry seems assured. Betsy Turecky is being

called on increasingly to serve as a consultant to share our story and work with newly developing "commuter" campus ministries across the country. As Robert Gribbon states in his new book, Students, Churches, and Higher Education (Judson Press, 1981):

> "There is a high degree of partnership, mutual support and cooperation between this campus ministry and the congregations in Dallas, Texas. If we can discover what works in the program in Dallas, we can learn from this in order to promote such partnerships in other places."

From a pastor's perspective, our church looks forward to increasingly helpful relationships with Eastfield College. We know we have not begun to tap all the resources there that might be beneficial to us. But we are grateful that the college administration is open to what needs we present and will assist us in meeting them. This relationship, in the context of the freedom of both parties, is surely part of our Christian ethic to love our neighbor as ourself. The college has been a good neighbor to us; we hope we have been a good neighbor as well. Working together, we both enhance our efforts to serve mutual neighbors in our community.

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